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Things You Should Know About...SPAMMING

The Illinois General Assembly recently passed the Electronic Mail Act, which became effective on January 1, 2000. The Electronic Mail Act contains a civil provision that prohibits, among other things, the sending of unsolicited electronic mail advertisements if: (1) the advertisement uses a person's Internet domain without that person's permission, or in some other way misrepresents any information that identifies the point of origin of the message; or (2) contains false or misleading information in the subject line. A criminal provision of the Electronic Mail Act prohibits, among other things, the sending of unsolicited bulk electronic mail messages with falsified or forged header information.

Unfortunately, it is often difficult to determine from looking at an electronic mail message whether this act has been violated. If you receive unsolicited mail, you may wish to inform your mail server of the unsolicited message you received. Many mail servers have a separate electronic mail address for that purpose. You can also forward the message (and any other unsolicited message) to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Another step you can take to reduce the amount of unsolicited electronic mail messages you receive is to register your e-mail address with the Direct Marketing Association's E-Mail Preference Service (e-MPS). Once you have registered, you will not receive unsolicited e-mail from members of the Direct Marketing Association unless you have a previously established business relationship with a company. Your registration will remain effective for one year. To learn more about the e-MPS or to register your e-mail address, go to:

http://e-mps.org/en/ind_static.html

Better Business Bureau

www.bbb.org

Federal Trade Commission

www.ftc.gov

Illinois Attorney General's Office

www.ag.state.il.us

Chicago

1-800-386-5438

TTY: 1-800-964-3013

Springfield

1-800-243-0618

TTY: 1-877-844-5461

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1-800-243-0607

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